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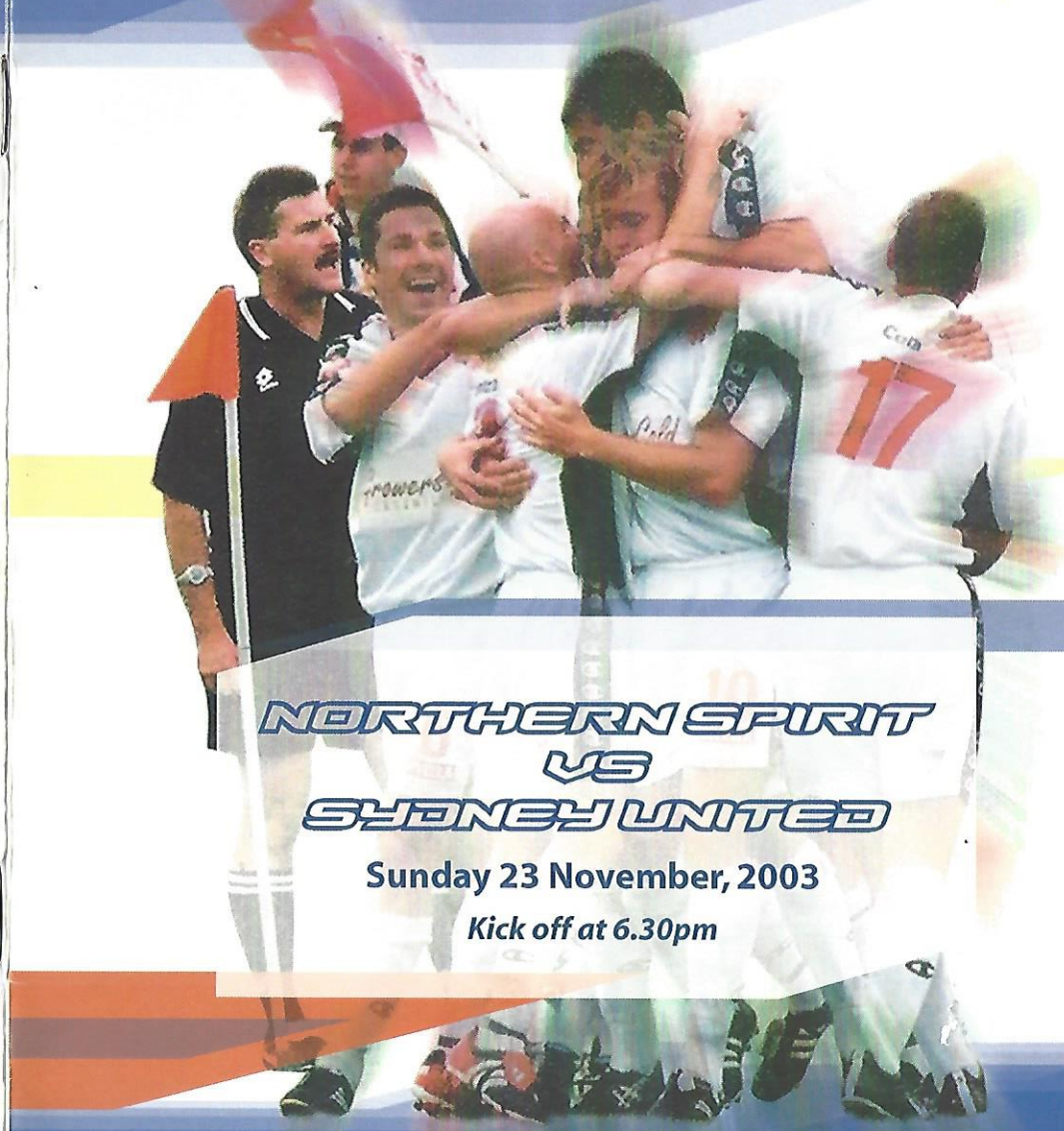
# SPIRIT NEWS



## NORTHERN SPIRIT VS SYDNEY UNITED

**Sunday 23 November, 2003**

***Kick off at 6.30pm***

# BRING IT ON!

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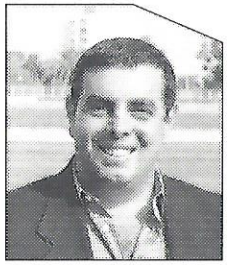
## *Antonio Gelonesi – Chairman*



It's a Sunday and Spirit are back in action at Pittwater Park taking on Sydney United. I hope you enjoy the game today and thank you for your support of the Club. Since our last match here over 200 additional seats have been added to the stadium as well as additional work on the pitch, we hope you like the improvements!

Recently there has been plenty of press speculation regarding the re-launch of the National Soccer League next season. Rumors are flying regarding the number of teams that will be in the competition, which Clubs will stay, which Clubs will go and so on. As I have expressed before, Northern Spirit have and continue to be focused on being part of any new national competition in Australia. Our community links, focus on youth development, sponsorship deals and new brand combined with our on field performances and the quality of our squad are all designed to ensure our sustainability and inclusion in any new competition. This week I spoke to one of Spirit's fans extensively on this topic and I invite you to read that interview which has been included in this program.

Spirit's three wins in a row has seen us jump up the table to sit in third position behind last season's champions, Perth Glory, and this seasons favourites, Parramatta Power. Third place is the highest table position the Club has ever held so congratulations to the team for their efforts and to you for your support of the side. While our bye last week has since seen us move to fifth spot, our side is proving that last season's finals efforts were not a fluke and we're here to compete.

The Spirit team this season has been scoring plenty of goals, working hard together and moving forward with the synergy that they showed late last season. This year it is clear that Spirit is a year older and they have displayed their wisdom and NSL experience gained last year on the pitch. I hope we see more of this today and walk away with the win!

Disappointment this week for one of our up and coming players Mark Milligan who was forced out of the Australian under 20 World Cup side due to injury. Mark will receive treatment on his injured knee before returning to the Spirit side and we wish him a speedy recovery. He, along with the rest of us, will watch the under 20's progress closely as Spirit regulars Alex Wilkinson and Jonathan Richter travel with the team to the UAE for the tournament. They will be in action from November 28th when they take on the Czech Republic in their first match. Good luck to them both!

***Enjoy the game!***

**NORTHERN SPIRIT**
**VS**
**SYDNEY UNITED**

**Sunday 23 November, 2003**
***Kick off at 6.30pm***

## View From the Top – Lawrie McKinna

It is good to be back at Pittwater Park. The last few weeks have been great for us and we are hoping to keep things going tonight against Sydney United.

We are now a third of the way through the season and are sitting in the top six. It is up to us now to keep the foot on the peddle and, if last season is any indication, we can improve on our current form and position. This does not happen automatically, of course, but the results over the last month have helped us over the disappointment of some of the earlier games this year when we perhaps deserved more.

Wins against the Knights, Wolves and Kingz in our last three games have brought us up the table and some may argue that the bye last weekend came at the wrong time for us considering the momentum we had.

Our last win in New Zealand, however, was not an impressive display and so the training since and trial games against a touring team from Singapore have been geared towards getting ourselves mentally right against what will be a determined United team.

On a more personal note, the players and I have really appreciated the effort that you, the fans, put in to supporting us at home every fortnight. We are sure that tonight will be no exception and we will do our best to come through with a win for you.

***Enjoy the game and keep up the support!***

## Our Visitors Today: Sydney United

Sydney United currently sit just below Spirit on the table with equal points but a lesser goal difference. Their goals for and against perhaps sum up their team so far this season – a side that might not score too many goals but one that will not concede many either.

Only four goals have slipped past keeper Liam Reddy (#1) in 8 games. Marshalling the defense from sweeper is captain and former Spirit player Mark Rudan (#21). The two centre backs in front of him are Damon Collina (#11) and the experienced Joe Vrkic (#6).

Tricky midfielder Anthony Doumanis (#23) is their leading goal scorer this year, scoring two of their total of six. Joining him in midfield tonight will be former Wollongong Wolves player David Huxley (#8) and perhaps two more Spirit old boys in Matthew Langdon (#7) and Michael Cunico (#5).

The striking formation is perhaps the hardest to guess. First time NSL coach Grant Lee's biggest concern in a successful start has been where the goals will come from and he is still looking for the right combination. Sean Babic (#10) is an experienced goal scorer who has not found the target this year and he has been recently joined by Brendan Santalab (#19) after knocking in plenty in the off season in Malaysia. They are both small, mobile players and may not be teamed up together but are both likely to be involved at some time during the game.

On the other side of the coin the Spirit team have scored plenty this year but would no doubt like to concede less down the other end. They are also looking for four wins on the trot. It should be a great Sydney derby, enjoy!



## Spirit Focus on...Captain, Noel Spencer

| | |
|---|---|
| **Shirt Number:** | 4 |
| **Team:** | Northern Spirit |
| **Nickname:** | Spenna or Spenny |
| **How did you get it:** | From my surname |
| **Marital Status:** | I have a partner |
| **Age:** | 26 |
| **Date of Birth:** | 26/07/1977 |
| **Place of birth:** | Wollongong, NSW, Australia |
| **Height:** | 185cm |
| **Weight:** | 82kg |

### Football Information Season 2003/2004

**Spirit 2003/2004 Matches:** 7

**2003/2004 Yellow Cards:** 4

### Football Information

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **NSL Matches:** | 151 | **Representative Honours:** | U/23 Australian Squad, Australian Schoolboys |
| **NSL Goals:** | 7 | | |
| **Signed with Spirit:** | 2000 | **Best Football Moment:** | Winning the1999/2000 NSL Final |
| **Spirit Matches:** | 37 | **Worst Football Moment:** | Australia missing the World Cup |
| **Spirit goals:** | 5 | **Worst Soccer Injury:** | Hernia, season 1998/1999 |
| **First Ever Soccer Club:** | Koonawarra Swans | **Pre-Match Meal:** | Chicken, rice & veggies |
| **Previous Clubs:** | Wollongong Wolves | **Pre-Match Superstitions:** | None |
| **NSL Debut:** | 1996, Wolves vs Cosmos | **Pet Hate on Field:** | People that give up |
| **Playing Position:** | Midfield/Defence | **Funniest Team Mate:** | Adam Kwasnik |
| **Left or Right Footed:** | Both. Right preferred | **Best Advice / Given by:** | Always do your best. Dad |

### Trivia

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Favourite Movie:** | Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels | **Which cartoon character are you most like:** | Bart Simpson |
| **Favourite TV Show:** | Home & Away | **Greatest fear:** | Heights |
| **Favourite Band/Music:** | Coldplay | **I'd like to improve on:** | My scoring ability |
| **Favourite Food:** | Roast Dinners | **Can't Live Without:** | Food |
| **Worst Habit:** | Biting my finger nails | **Describe Yourself in three words:** | Honest Decent Bloke |
| **When not playing:** | Relax, play golf, beach | | |
| **Dream Date:** | Kylie Minogue | **Can you Cook/Speciality:** | Sure can. Satay Chicken Stir Fry |
| **Favourite Holiday:** | Ulladulla, South Coast | | |

# NORTHERN SPIRIT

| Shirt No. | Name | Playing Position | Date of Birth |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Paul Henderson | Goalkeeper | 22/04/76 |
| 2 | Julian Watts | Defender | 17/03/71 |
| 3 | Wayne O'Sullivan | Midfield | 25/02/74 |
| 4 | Noel Spencer | Midfield | 26/07/77 |
| 5 | Alex Tobin | Defender | 03/11/65 |
| 6 | Vuko Tomasevic | Midfield | 13/02/80 |
| 8 | Ian Ferguson | Midfield | 15/03/67 |
| 9 | Adam Kwasnik | Striker | 31/05/83 |
| 10 | Dylan Macallister | Striker | 17/05/82 |
| 11 | Jonathan Richter | Midfield | 12/04/83 |
| 12 | John Hutchinson | Midfield | 29/12/79 |
| 14 | Bradley Groves | Midfield | 29/01/82 |
| 16 | Brent Fisher | Striker | 06/07/83 |
| 17 | Stewart Petrie | Striker | 27/02/70 |
| 18 | Alex Wilkinson | Defender | 13/08/84 |
| 22 | Matthew Osman | Defender | 29/07/83 |
| 23 | Steven Baveas | Midfield | 07/04/84 |
| 24 | Oliver Skelding | Midfield | 02/05/85 |
| 25 | Omar Obeid | Midfield | 23/05/85 |
| 26 | Andrew Mailer | Midfield | 19/04/84 |
| 28 | Matthew Hunter | Defender | 29/04/84 |
| 29 | Michael Mouyis | Defender | 04/06/85 |
| 30 | Jacob Rex | Goalkeeper | 04/10/84 |
| 31 | Travis Oughtred | Defender | 02/07/85 |
| 33 | Mark Milligan | Defender | 04/08/85 |



# SYDNEY UNITED

| Shirt No. | Name | Playing Position | Date of Birth |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Liam Reddy | Goalkeeper | 08/08/81 |
| 2 | Milan Bosnar | Defender | 29/09/83 |
| 3 | Labinot Haliti | Midfield | 26/10/84 |
| 4 | Michael Santalab | Defender | 25/08/79 |
| 5 | Michael Cunico | Midfield | 17/03/79 |
| 6 | Joe Vrkic | Defender | 31/08/76 |
| 7 | Mathew Langdon | Midfield | 02/05/80 |
| 8 | David Huxley | Midfield | 16/10/76 |
| 9 | Franco Parisi | Striker | 03/05/83 |
| 10 | Zeljko (Sean) Babic | Striker | 03/04/76 |
| 11 | Damon Collina | Defender | 13/09/78 |
| 12 | Luka Glavas | Midfield | 20/01/85 |
| 13 | Dean Heffernan | Utility | 19/05/80 |
| 14 | Petar Markovic | Defender | 10/07/83 |
| 15 | George Nohra | Midfield | 29/04/82 |
| 16 | Christian Cevenini | Midfield | 31/01/82 |
| 17 | Tolgay Ozbey | Striker | 12/04/86 |
| 18 | Paul Ivanic | Striker | 11/07/82 |
| 19 | Brendon Santalab | Striker | 09/09/82 |
| 20 | Ivan Nestevski | Goalkeeper | 25/02/80 |
| 21 | Mark Rudan | Defender | 27/08/75 |
| 22 | Goran Janev | Midfield | 13/02/84 |
| 23 | Anthony Doumanis | Midfield | 02/01/82 |
| 24 | Antoni Zmire | Midfield/Striker | 23/03/76 |
| 25 | Marko Filipovic | Midfield | 19/03/84 |

## From the Terrace: A Chat with Antonio Gelonesi – Graham Hand

***GH:*** How does a global expert in climate change with 20 years of experience in the finance industry end up owning a soccer club?

***AG:*** I've always been a soccer fan and I have business interests in other sports. Soccer seemed like a business that could be improved and it needed some lateral methodologies. Many of the things being done were tired. I felt that with Northern Spirit, I could work to help the community reabsorb the Club, bring it back to grass roots, and then drive it into a new APL (Australian Premier League) model. It was something I assessed and analysed, without taking anything away from the emotional side.

***GH:*** So it was not only a love for the sport but a business decision as well?

***AG:*** Absolutely. But what also drives me these days is that I have a strong community focus. I've worked hard and done well, and feel I have a responsibility to contribute. I want to give the local Associations within the Spirit demographics the opportunity to take a role. Then I will feel I've done a good job.

***GH:*** The early signs from the new APL are they want to take the game up a level. Northern Spirit is a long way from the crowds of 10,000 and a field as good as, say, Marconi's. Have we got the right foundations?

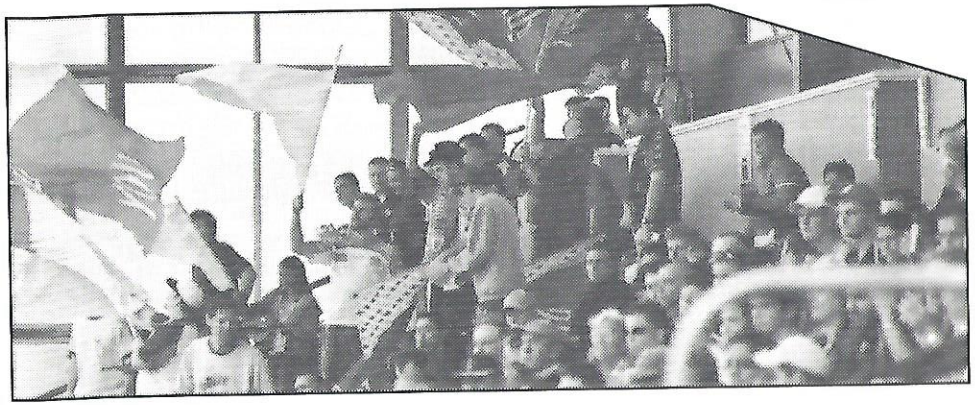
***AG:*** We need to ensure the public is sold that soccer is a reliable sport. The public has a choice what to view, and a key to success is the links with the community. If we are endorsed by the community, we can draw crowds of 10,000. We want to give local youth a pathway to the National League. We want to be Sydney's 'North of the Bridge' team, a regional focus where your team becomes your responsibility. We want kids of 14 to 19 years of age to come to the Club and have fun. And I must add that Pittwater Council has been fantastic.

***GH:*** Is the dispute with Rangers sorted out?

***AG:*** It is ongoing, but I am expecting an amicable closure soon. There are no synergies with Rangers, and their influence recently has been negative.

***GH:*** Do you become involved in team selections?

***AG:*** No, I leave it to Lawrie. He knows who's been training well, who's carrying injuries. He might discuss it with Bill Collins. The great thing about Lawrie is that he is not frightened to give the youth a game. We laugh whether we win, lose or draw. I support him, no matter what.





***GH:*** It was notable last year that the Spirit players had more faith in themselves, working hard even if they were behind with ten minutes to go.

***AG:*** Last year, the team had greater energy, was well coached, was extremely fit, and they weren't scared. We had no fear. We are a team that goes for a result, not a draw. Hats off to Lawrie. The boys believe in themselves. That's the mandate Spirit has, to entertain and allow players to express themselves. This year, we have an even better side.

***GH:*** There's a lot of discussion among the fans about the best time to hold games. What's your view?

***AG:*** I respect the fans enormously. The core from the North Sydney days is fantastic. I've heard there is a preference for Friday night, but many fans would find it difficult to get to Pittwater. We are trying to slot in some Friday nights, but each night will attract a different type of fan. Younger kids are affected by late Sunday finishes, Saturday is a family day when lots of functions are held, I'm aware we have not got it 100% right, but it's not 100% wrong either.

***GH:*** Has Lowy contacted you? Do you know him?

***AG:*** There are a number of layers to the new structure at Soccer Australia, and there are discussions across the layers outside the public domain for the betterment of the game. Lowy and advisers are very professional people. Sometimes, a little bit of information is too much. My prediction is it will be communicated en masse. Yes, I've been privy to a number of conversations on future directions and I've heard nothing threatening to Northern Spirit's position. If anything, it motivates me to create a sustainable environment.

***GH:*** Is there any message you want to give the fans?

***AG:*** A team is a reflection of yourself. A few years ago, Spirit had a confused image in the marketplace. We have tried to create an identity which makes the fans comfortable. Then people can say, Spirit is a representation of who I am. We are a team of fighters. Last year's turnaround to make the finals was the most spectacular recovery in NSL history.

I'm scared about what I'm wishing for next. I know we are serious contenders, and I believe being a Top 3 team this year is mandatory. We want people to think, "Spirit is My Team". What more do we need? We need a reliable, well structured APL, and we will contribute to that.

***There will be more from the chat with Antonio in coming weeks.***

**Get your Northern Spirit Merchandise TODAY!**

***To look like your favourite Spirit player or just support the team, grab your official merchandise at today's match! With a full range of gear you can buy the latest Spirit merchandise available! Check out the range and sizes at the merchandise stall today!***

*Next Spirit Match:*

## *Northern Spirit*
## *vs*
## *Parramatta Power*

**Saturday 29 November, 2003 – Parramatta Stadium**

***Kick off at 6.30pm***

**First leg of the "Champion Cup"**

Champion

*Next Spirit Home Match:*

## NORTHERN SPIRIT
## VS
## SOUTH MELBOURNE

**Sunday 7 December, 2003 – Pittwater Park**

***Gates open at 3.45pm,***

**WNSL Curtain Raiser**

***NSW Sapphires vs Adelaide Sensation 4.00pm***

***Spirit Match 6.30pm***

# BRING IT ON!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